

# ANNALS OF IOWA.

VOL. XII.

IOWA CITY, JANUARY, 1874.

No. 1.

## EARLY HISTORY OF IOWA.

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[Continued from page 603, Vol. XI., No. 4.]

IN 1848 there were two elections—one in August, at which there were to be elected two members of congress, the state officers, and members of the legislature; and in November, for the first time, the electors of Iowa had an opportunity to take part in the presidential election. Lewis Cass was the democratic, and Zachariah Taylor the whig candidate; and from the importance of the election, political excitement ran high, and there was more interest taken, and greater exertions made, than there ever had been before in Iowa. For the August election the democrats re-nominated all the old state officers, with the exception of Cutler, the secretary of the state, who, from his course pursued towards Harlan, or from some other reasons, had become unpopular with the people. Josiah Bonney, of Van Buren county, was nominated in his place. A. C. Dodge, Lincoln Clark, John Selmon, and Joseph Williams were nominated for presidential electors by the democrats;

and Fitz Henry Warren, William H. Wallace, Jesse Bowen, and Thomas J. McKean were the whig electors. The Mormons, who had settled on the western slope of the state, had become so numerous that their votes were a matter of great consideration to both political parties. When in Illinois they nearly all voted the same way, and generally with the democrats; but in voting they were mostly governed by their leaders, and their votes were cast for those persons whom they thought would be most likely to favor the Mormon interest. Orson Hyde, who was the presiding elder over the Mormons in Iowa, and had the superintendence of this part of the church, visited Burlington early in the season, had a long interview with Warren, one of the presidential electors, and it was currently circulated that he had received some personal favor from, and had pledged himself to, Warren that the Mormon vote should be cast for the whigs at the coming election, if they were permitted to vote. At this time it was supposed there were from eight to ten thousand Mormons in the western part of the state, and that they would at least cast eight hundred or a thousand votes, if they were all brought to the polls, a vote which would probably carry the election in the first congressional district, if not the state, and elect the whig candidates in the western districts to the legislature. When it became understood that the Mormons at the coming election would vote with the whigs, there was great anxiety on the part of the leading democrats to counteract the influence of this vote. Judge Carlton, whose duty it had been made by law to appoint a sheriff for the purpose of organizing Pottawattamie county, whenever he should think the public good required it, had appointed William S. Townsend, a democrat, organizing sheriff, and had ordered that an election should take place on the first Monday of April, 1848. But when it was ascertained that the Mormons would probably vote with the whigs, Townsend declined to act, and consequently the county was not organized, and without an organization of some kind they could not vote

at the coming election. After the Mormons found out that Townsend was not going to organize the county, they petitioned the county commissioners of Monroe county to "grant them a township for the purpose of electing two justices of the peace and constables, as they labored under much disadvantage for the want of legal authority among them, and that the election might be held at the council house in Kaneshville" (now Council Bluffs city).

On the third of July the board of commissioners of Monroe county ordered "That that portion of the country called Pottawattamie county, which lies directly west of Monroe county (at that time it was supposed that Kaneshville was due west of Monroe county) be organized into a township, and that Kaneshville be a precinct for election purposes in said township, and that the boundaries of said township extend east as far as the East Nishnabotna;" and they also ordered "That that portion of the country called Clarke county, lying immediately west of Lucas county, to what is called East Nishnabotna, be organized into a precinct for election and judicial purposes."

The organization of these precincts became a matter of much concern to the democrats; and the securing or defeating the Mormon vote was a matter of much interest to both parties. After the election was over, about the time it was supposed the poll-books would be returned to the clerk's office in Monroe county from the Kaneshville precinct, quite a number of active politicians from both parties assembled at Albia, the county seat of Monroe county. Among those most active were James B. Howell, the editor of a whig paper at Keokuk, on the whig side, and J. C. Hall in behalf of the democrats. James Sloan, one of the clerks, brought the poll-books of the Kaneshville precinct to Albia, where there arose quite a spirited discussion about the clerk's receiving them. Howell contended that they ought to be received and counted by the clerk, and Hall opposed it. Sloan, in his deposition taken afterwards in relation to this matter, in speaking of the clerk, said: "He (the clerk)

received the poll-books by reaching out his hand and taking them. I informed him what it was. He looked at the parcel on both sides, and reached out his hand to return it to me. I declined accepting it. He afterwards went partly around the table and put it under some newspapers and other papers, where lay some books, close by where a gentleman sat, who, I was informed, was Doctor Flint, with his left arm resting on the table. I requested the clerk to endorse the poll-books, stating who had brought them, and how far I had come. He declined doing so. I told him that I was bound to deliver the poll-books; that I had understood there was a heavy penalty if I neglected to do it, and that I now wished to get my pay; also that I had performed my duty, and I would not carry them back or receive them, and told the clerk that we had no use for the poll-books. Mr. Hall then told the clerk he might sweep them into the street (in reply to a question as to what should be done with them), and I replied, he might, for aught I cared, as it did not concern me, I had done my duty." The clerk refused to receive the Kanessville poll-books, on the ground that the county commissioners of Monroe county had no right to organize the township, and the Mormon vote was not counted, in canvassing the votes. The room where the parties had assembled was in a log house, with the floor laid down with loose boards, and while the contest was going on about what was to be done with the poll-books, they fell down from the table on the floor, and probably, by the aid of some one's foot, they got through a crack in the floor and were missing. After the crowd had dispersed, Israel Keister, learning where the poll-books were, went and got them from under the floor and put them into Hall's carpet-sack. Hall, on his way home, found the poll-books in his possession, and did not make it public that he had them, and there were many surmises for a long while as to what had become of them.

Of the votes that were counted and officially returned for congressman for the first congressional district, William

Thompson, the democratic candidate, received six thousand four hundred and seventy-seven votes; and Daniel F. Miller, the whig candidate, received six thousand and ninety-one votes. In the Kaneshville precinct Miller received four hundred and ninety-three votes, while Thompson only received thirty votes. The votes for the other candidates on the different sides were about the same. If the Mormon vote had been counted, Miller would have received the certificate of election.

Miller contested Thompson's election, and during the progress of taking testimony the lost poll-books were discovered by Miller, under the following circumstances; Charles Mason had been employed by Thompson as his attorney, to aid in taking testimony to sustain his right to hold his seat in congress. Mason asked Miller one day to go to his office and acknowledge the services of some notices to take depositions to be used in evidence in relation to the contested seat. Miller complied with Mason's request. Mason then took from his desk a bundle of papers and handed them to Miller. Miller, on receiving them, exclaimed,—“Judge Mason, you have made a mistake; you have given me the poll-books of the Kaneshville precinct that Hall stole.” Judge Mason extended his hand as though he desired to take them back. Miller said: “We will examine them,” and asked Judge Mason where he had obtained them. The Judge agitatedly replied, “I assure you, Mr. Miller, I came by them honestly, but I am not at liberty to tell how or of whom.”

When this discovery was made known to the public, all the whig papers and politicians were loud in their clamors and denunciations of the democrats, and particularly of those who had had anything to do with the Mormon vote, and for several years “the stolen poll-books” was the cant phrase of the whig party. When the whigs ascertained how the Mormons voted at the August election, they thought if all the settlements on the western slope were organized into precincts, so that all could easily get to the

polls, that with the Mormon vote they would be able to carry the state at the November election, and there was a great anxiety, on the part of the whigs, to have Pottawattamie county organized. Fitz Henry Warren, who was regarded as one of the best managers in the state, had been made chairman of the whig executive state committee, and had been entrusted with the funds raised to defray the expense of the campaign. He undertook to have Pottawattamie county organized and laid off into suitable precincts, so as to have the vote of every voter. Warren found in the person of one William Pyckett, whose family were living at Kanessville, as he thought, a suitable person to organize the country purchased from the Pottawattamie Indians into a county, as provided for by the legislature; and as an inducement for him to undertake it he gave him one hundred and forty dollars from the whig funds in his hands, which he was to receive for his services, over and above the fees allowed by law.

Pyckett, having been known for some time previous as a democrat, and professing to be desirous for the success of the democratic party, and claiming he could induce the Mormons to vote as they had formerly done, and it not being known that he was under the pay of Warren, succeeded in getting some influential democrats to recommend the organizing of the western slope of Iowa into a county, and Pyckett as a suitable person to do it, and upon this recommendation he received the appointment. Pyckett did not have the prudence to keep these matters to himself, but on his way back, while in Burlington, told that he had received a commission from Judge Carlton to organize Pottawattamie county, and that Warren had given him one hundred and forty dollars. When it was known that he was acting under the pay of Warren, some of the democrats who had signed his recommendation were very much chagrined, and the leading democrats about Burlington determined to defeat his undertaking, if possible.

The law, authorizing the appointment of an organizing

sheriff, required that the person appointed, before he should be qualified to enter upon the discharge of the duties of his office, should file his bond and oath of office in the clerk's office of the district court of Polk county. J. C. Hall was dispatched to go forthwith to Polk county and get the clerk to resign, so that the appointed organizing sheriff could not qualify. Pyckett, not suspecting any attempt to defeat him in his undertaking, and not being in a hurry, took things so leisurely that when he got to Polk county he found that Hall had been there some two or three days previous to his arrival, and had defeated the object of his mission, for there was no officer there to receive his bond and administer the oath of office, and by this manœuvre Pottawattamie county was not organized in time for those settlers on the western slope to vote at the presidential election.

With the exception of Thompson, the democrats this year were triumphant, both at the August and November elections, and elected the congressional, state, and electoral ticket by a decided majority, and also had the ascendancy in both branches of the legislature, and in joint ballot a majority of nineteen. It was thus known that the democrats could elect United States senators and supreme judges, and these offices elicited much interest among the politicians, and at the convening of the legislature there were a great number of the leading democrats from all parts of the state assembled at Iowa City, each using his best exertions to get himself or his particular friend elected United States senator or supreme judge.

Soon after the legislature was organized the democrats held a caucus and nominated candidates for senators, and adjourned till the next night to nominate candidates for supreme judges. At this caucus A. C. Dodge and George W. Jones were nominated for senators. As soon as the result was known, taking the nomination as equivalent to an election, shouts of joy were heard all over the city, and a large number of their friends went to their lodgings to inform them of the result of the caucus, and immediately all

parties repaired to a saloon, where there was a general time of rejoicing, and oysters and liquor were dealt out with profusion, for which the candidates were charged three hundred dollars, a treat of unknown liberality in the history of Iowa at that time. On the next day the caucus met again to nominate judges, and Joseph Williams received the nomination for chief justice; George Greene and John F. Kinney for associate justices. Hastings was a candidate for chief justice, and was confident of getting the nomination, but having failed, as soon as he learned the result of the caucus, he undertook to cheer his wounded ambition by the use of stimulants, and he remained at the capital several days so much exhilarated, that his bearing was not very becoming a chief justice, and was exceedingly mortifying to his friends. He was finally persuaded to go home, and when he was once more himself, such was his chagrin at his defeat and conduct, that he immediately went to work to settle up his business and dispose of his property, for the purpose of leaving the state, and the next spring moved to California. Hastings had always been regarded as rather an intriguing politician, and the trick which he had played off on the old chief justice the previous winter had much to do in his defeat, and in nominating Williams in his place. The caucus having selected the candidates, the contest for place was over, and the legislature only had to go through with the form of an election to complete the work.

The memorials sent to congress by the previous legislature, asking for a grant of land to aid in the building of railroads in Iowa, were referred to the appropriate committee, but the committee reported against the prayer of the memorials, on the ground that the proposed routes had not been surveyed, and there was no data before the committee by which they could judge of the distance or practicability of the proposed routes. When these objections were ascertained, the friends of the Dubuque and Keokuk route immediately went to work to get stock taken in their proposed road, and to organize a company; and the organizing of the

company was completed in the month of December, 1848, at Iowa City, by electing Lucius Langworthy, of Dubuque, president; P. R. Skinner, of Anamosa, secretary; J. H. Fisher, of Iowa City, treasurer; and a board of directors. The company employed Major Thomas J. McKean as their engineer, who made a cursory survey of the route, and made a lengthy report to the board of directors. This report was laid before the legislature, which was accepted and adopted by that body; and another memorial, asking for a grant of land, was passed, and, with the engineer's report, sent to the senators and representatives from Iowa for them to present to congress. There was also another memorial passed by the legislature, asking for a grant of land to aid in constructing a road "from Davenport, by Muscatine, Iowa City, and Fort Des Moines, to some suitable point near Council Bluffs, on the Missouri river." These proposed routes now begun to assume a character of importance, particularly the one from Dubuque to Keokuk, and there appeared to be a fair prospect of those roads being built at an early date.

The prospect of getting these thoroughfares, stirred up much feeling along the proposed routes, and there arose a spirited contest between the different towns and counties about the location of the proposed road. Davenport and Iowa City wished to have this road run on a straight line, and not towards Muscatine, and this created much ill-feeling and produced many harsh words between the citizens of the two places. On the Dubuque and Keokuk line, in the north, Cedar and Linn were rivals, and in the south Henry and Jefferson counties spiritedly contended for the location of this road through their county seats.

Soon after the meeting of the legislature, in 1850, the Dubuque and Keokuk road attracted special attention, and a large number of prominent men from along the line of this road assembled at the capital and effected a new organization, with two sets of officers; one set were to control the business south, and the other north of Iowa City, and

were known as the north and south divisions. In the articles of incorporation, and in the memorial passed by the legislature that winter, asking for a grant of land, the towns of Cascade, Anamosa, Marion, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Washington, Fairfield, Glasgow, Salem, and West Point were made points on the road. At that time this had every appearance of being the first road that would be built in Iowa, and if the proper efforts had been made, probably would have been.

Along the line of the road, and particularly in Jefferson county, there were liberal subscriptions made, and there were sanguine hopes entertained of obtaining a grant of land for its aid at the next congress. At that time there had not any railroad reached the Mississippi from the east, and nearly all the trade from Iowa sought an eastern outlet by going down the river. The citizens of Keokuk, who, as a matter of fact were to be benefited the most by the undertaking, thinking they were by their location "The Gate," through which most of the trade of the back country must pass, whether the road was built or not, took very little interest in the enterprise. Without the aid of those at Keokuk, where the road was to commence, those north of Keokuk, and especially in Jefferson county, did not feel like engaging in the undertaking, and the public mind was looking to Keokuk with much anxiety to see what they would do.

The citizens of Keokuk called a meeting to take this matter into consideration, but instead of giving their immediate aid to the enterprise, they resolved that it was an impracticable undertaking at that time, and organized a company to build a plank road up the divide towards Des Moines, leaving Fairfield entirely at one side. The proceedings of this meeting was a great mistake on the part of Keokuk, which they soon saw, but too late to remedy it. When the news reached Fairfield that Keokuk took no interest in the railroad enterprise, and had undertaken to build a plank road, to run about six miles south of the place,

it made a great change in the public sentiment in this county, and notwithstanding the citizens of the whole county had before that been strongly wedded to Keokuk, and refused all overtures from Burlington, all those in the vicinity of Fairfield turned their whole attention to the opening up of a thoroughfare to Burlington.

The citizens of Burlington, ever watchful of their own interests, had not looked upon the Keokuk and Dubuque project with indifference. They saw that if this road was built it would take a great portion of the trade of the back country from their city. They watched the movements of Keokuk, saw their blunder, and were not slow to take advantage of it. They renewed their efforts to induce the citizens of Jefferson county to apply their means in opening up a thoroughfare to that place. They also, at their own expense, at the meeting of the next congress, employed a person and sent him to Washington as a lobby member, to work against the proposed land grant to the Dubuque and Keokuk road. The papers at Burlington attacked the project with fierceness, particularly the *Telegraph*, a paper conducted by James Morgan, who, in his paper, gave it the name of "The Ram's Horn Railroad," on account of the route being so crooked, and by ridicule and other effects, mostly on the part of Burlington, the anticipated grant of land was defeated, and all hopes of building the proposed road blasted. Whereas, had Keokuk exerted herself as she might at the proper time, there was a strong probability that the necessary grant of land might have been obtained from the general government, and that this would have been the first road built in the state, which in all probability would have made Keokuk the largest town in the state. Sometimes, as in this case, small things are attended with big results.

In January, 1849, there was an act passed creating the fifth judicial district, which was composed of Appanoose, Wayne, Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor, Page, Fremont, Monroe, Lucas, Clarke, Marion, Warren, Madison, Jasper, Polk,

Dallas, Marshall, Story, and Boone counties. This district was organized at this time mostly through the influence of Thomas Baker, the former member of the legislature, from Polk county, who was charged with having got this district made so that he could be elected judge. This district, as formed, was supposed to have a large democratic majority. Baker was the democratic candidate, and William McKay the whig candidate. Baker was accused of being an infidel in his religious sentiments, while McKay was a member of the Methodist church, and on account of their religious sentiments McKay got a large vote from the members of the Methodist church, and though the district had a large democratic majority, McKay was chosen judge, much to the chagrin and disappointment of Baker. Baker, on account of the treatment he received at this election, became disgusted with Iowa, and immediately went to work to close his business, and moved to Oregon, where he became quite a prominent man.

The question of establishing a state university, and of disposing of the two townships of land given by congress for that purpose, came up before the legislature at this session; and acts were passed, establishing the main institution at Iowa City, one branch at Dubuque, and another at Fairfield; and also providing for normal schools at Andrew, Oskaloosa, and Mount Pleasant; and for the purpose of getting these institutions in operation at an early period, the citizens in some of the localities expended large sums of money in erecting buildings for educational purposes. But the state authorities subsequently changed their policy in relation to the state university, and those acts establishing the several branches were repealed, and all the funds were applied to the institution at Iowa City.

At this session of the legislature laws were passed for organizing the counties of Allamakee and Lucas, which made provisions for locating their county seats, and that the former county should hold a special election for the electing of county officers on the first day of the following March,

and that the latter should hold an election on the fourth day of the next July; and Thomas C. Linton was made the organizing sheriff for Allamakee county, and James Rosbland for Lucas county.

When Dodge and Jones took their seats in the United States senate as senators from Iowa, it became incumbent on them to be classified, and in their drawing for terms Dodge fell into that class of senators whose term expired the coming March. When this result was made known at Iowa City, the legislature immediately convened in joint convention, and Dodge was re-elected for another term, without any opposition in his own party. When Dodge learned of his re-election, he directed his friends at the capital to give the members of the legislature a ball at his expense. To this entertainment a large number of ladies and gentlemen were invited, besides the members of the legislature. The desks were taken out of the senate chamber, and there was at the state house one of the largest and most brilliant parties that had ever been witnessed at the capital.

Previous to 1849 there had for some time been a civil war within the jurisdiction of the Austrian government in Europe, in the province of Hungary, headed by Louis Kosuth. The Hungarians made a strong effort to throw off the yoke of Austrian tyranny, under which they were oppressed, and to establish a free government of their own. And the people of the United States had watched this struggle with a great deal of solicitude, and manifested much sympathy for those trying to throw off the yoke of oppression and gain their liberty. For a while the Hungarians met with success, and it was supposed they would succeed in their undertaking. But the Austrian government, having received assistance from Russia, succeeded in subduing their rebellious subjects, and many of the Hungarians were compelled to flee from their country. Among the prominent refugees was Governor Uzhzy, who, at the time of the breaking out of the rebellion, was governor of

one of the provinces of Hungary. Governor Uzhzy, to save himself from the vengeance of the Austrian government, fled from his country, and with a large number of Hungarians came to the United States and settled in Iowa, on Grand river, in the southern part of Decatur county. From the number who stopped here it was supposed they would build up a large town at this point, and have around it an extensive settlement of Hungarians. To show the good feeling which existed towards these emigrants, who were compelled to leave their native country, the legislature of Iowa passed a memorial to congress, in which they instructed the senators and requested the representatives to use their influence to secure to the Hungarian settlement in Iowa a donation of the public lands. The influence, which was brought to bear in their behalf, was such that the president did not have the lands, on which they were settled, offered for sale at the time the other lands around them were brought into market, and probably congress would have passed an act donating these lands to them, had they continued to occupy the locality which they first selected. In their native country they had been engaged in the grape cultivation, and made preparations to engage in the same business here, but finding the winters much more severe than in their native land, they came to the conclusion that the climate would not be favorable for this business, and they abandoned their settlement at this place and moved to Texas, and other parties entered their lands.

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